



INShape 150 – Strength Training

Push and pull for better health

When people think of exercising to improve their fitness level, using treadmills and elliptical machines are usually what come to mind. Cardiovascular exercise tends to be our main focus, with little attention paid to strength training. Increasing our muscle tone improves the efficiency of our metabolism and reduces the amount of fat our body stores. The Center for Disease Control recommends that you engage in at least two days of strength training per week and work all the major muscle groups of your body.



If not actively used, lean muscle mass decreases over time. Losing just one-half pound of muscle annually causes our bodies resting metabolism to slow down, increasing the amount of fat we store. However, if we increase our lean muscle mass we increase our resting metabolism. With consistent strength training our bodies become more efficient at burning calories and using up fat reserves. The equation is pretty simple, the more muscle you add the less fat you store. Because many people are unfamiliar with strength training they do not include it in their routine. Follow these basics so you can enjoy a safe and well rounded workout:

- **Learn the technique** – You do not want to injure yourself, so maintaining proper form and technique is very important. Consult a personal trainer if you have questions about how to perform an exercise properly or visit the [CDC web site](#) for more information on strength training at home.
- **A single set does the job** – Research has shown that a single set of 12 repetitions with adequate weight can build muscle just as effectively as doing multiple sets of the same exercise. Make sure the weight you are using is heavy enough. You should struggle to finish your last repetition.
- **Start slow** – If you are a beginner, take it slow and use weight you are comfortable with. Once your body becomes accustomed to strength training you will be amazed at how quickly you progress. When you can easily do 12 repetitions of a particular weight, it's time to increase the resistance.

You are not limited to free weights when engaging in strength training. You can use machines, resistance bands, or even your own body weight. Remember that you do not have to spend hours in a gym to gain benefits. You can see results from just two or three 20-minute strength training sessions per week. Look for next week's newsletter as we discuss body weight exercises and how these basic movements can be incorporated into your strength training program.

Eight Foods You Didn't Know You Could (and Should) Be Eating!

Food #3: Quinoa

Have you ever heard of quinoa? This interesting little grain, pronounced "keen-wa," can add a new dynamic to your cooking. I personally discovered quinoa a few years ago, and not only have I been eating it ever since, but I've been amazed at its versatility! Quinoa truly has a magical history. It is similar to a whole grain and native to the Andes Mountains. The Inca used to call it "the mother of all grains," and it was a major staple of their diet. When compared to other grains, quinoa has the highest protein content, is packed with fiber, and is loaded with B vitamins. Protein, fiber, and B-vitamins are the perfect energy-giving combination: something that white rice just can't live up to. I substitute quinoa for rice in every dish it calls for, even old favorites like fried rice. Quinoa is cooked similarly to rice, using a 2:1 liquid to grain ratio. There is no way you can mess it up. Add chopped veggies, nuts, or meat to cooked quinoa and you will have a delicious and nutritious meal. Try the recipe below for your first quinoa experience.



Black Bean and Corn Quinoa

Most of us have never tried quinoa, but it is the perfect high-fiber, high-protein alternative to starches! It cooks just like rice, but tastes much better.

1 small onion, chopped

½ teaspoon kosher salt

2 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 cup dry quinoa

1 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed

1 cup frozen corn kernels

1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes (any kind will do!)

1 teaspoon ground cumin

dash cayenne pepper

3 Tablespoons sliced green onions

¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped

1. Spray a medium-sized saucepan with non-stick cooking spray. Over medium-high heat and add onion, cooking until translucent (about 5 minutes). Turn heat to high and add chicken broth. Bring to a boil, add quinoa, cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer for 15 minutes.
2. Add rest of the ingredients, turn heat to low, and continue cooking just until warm. Serve warm or chilled!

Makes: about 6 ½ cups

Nutrition Facts per ½ cup serving:

Calories: 90

Total Fat: 1.5 g

Sat Fat: 0 g

Tans Fat: 0 g

Cholesterol: 0 mg

Sodium: 160 mg

Total Carb: 16 g

Dietary Fiber: 2 g

Sugars: 1 g

Protein: 4 g

For more nutrition tips visit Annessa at her [WIBC blog](#).